(c) whether there is any plan to include more towns from Orissa in next Plan period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) One town namely, Cuttack, has been included under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) on river Mahanadi in Orissa. The sanctioned cost for various pollution abatement works in this town is Rs. 14.04 crore.

(c) and (d) Inclusion of additional towns in the next Plan period under the NRCP would depend upon availability of necessary outlay, the necessity of such projects and willingness of the State Government to bear 30% of the total project cost.

Permission of Bt. brinjal

† 1851. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:

SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to take help of foreign companies to promote genetically modified (GM) farming;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that Government are considering to allow the farming of Bt. brinjal a patent of an American Company Monsento into in the country;

(c) if so, whether any study has been conducted by Government on this effects of GM crops keeping in view the issues related to health, environment and the social and financial status of our farmers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) No Sir. However, M/s Mahyco an Indian company has developed a Bt. brinjal which is resistant to the fruit and shoot borer. The Bt. gene has been developed by M/s Monsanto, an American Company and licensed to M/s Mahyco. The application of M/s Mahyco for conduct of large scale field trials of Bt. brinjal develped by M/s Mahyco is under cosideration of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) notified under Rules 1989 of the Environmental Protection Act, 1986.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) Any company involved in the development of GM food crop has to undertake extensive biosafety assessment which includes environmental safety assessment as well as food and feed safety as well as agronomic evaluation. The environmental safety assessment includes studies on pollen escape out - crossing, aggressiveness and weediness, effect of the gene on non-target organisms, presence of the protein in soil and its effect on soil microflora, confirmation of the absence of Terminator Gene, baseline susceptibility studies. The food and feed safety assessment studies include composition analysis, allergenicity and toxicological studies and feeding studies on fish, chicken, cows and buffaloes. Only those transgenic crops which are found to be safe for human consumption as well as the environment are approved for large scale trials. The product is approved for environmental release only when there is a clear socio-economic and technical justification for release of the product.

Joint crack down by army and forest staff on poachers

1852. SHRI AMAR SINGH:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to get army and forest staff to work together to crack down on poaching in reserves; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal and by when it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. There is no such decision taken by the Government.

(b) Does not arise.

National Forest Commission on forest conservation efforts

1853. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:.
SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to the National Forest Commission